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ABSTRACT

The concept of an administrator of literacy programs as one who is reflective of the values of those responsible for the program is explored in this paper. The paper places literacy in a framework of values as an instrumental value, or journey toward an end state, requiring competency from the individual. The theories of Paulo Freire, who advocates that literacy programs should arise from the needs of the students, are used in the paper to show that in literacy programs one is either working for liberation and the full development of human potential or for the control and manipulation of people. Freire's influence on adult literacy workers in Victoria, Australia, is noted and his theories are used as support for the decentralized literacy programs in that state. (MKM)

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Helen M. Gribble

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VALUES AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMS.

Helen M. Gribble

1. Some ideas about administration.

In the early part of my experience as an administrator I had a few uneasy feelings about my role. It would be extreme to describe them as shame and embarrassment. Nevertheless they were negative attitudes towards administrators which had developed over a long period. In my family context the role of teacher was always valued far above that of educational administrator. When I became a teacher myself I learnt first hand of the war, or at least armed neutrality, which characterised some working relationships between classroom teachers and principals who were the immediate, visible representatives of the whole administrative hierarchy. The contempt many teachers had for the more remote upper echelons of power in the Victorian Education Department did nothing to help me form positive attitudes towards their decision making function. Administrators were a necessity for the real work to be done, but a regrettable necessity. This was a puzzle since most had been classroom teachers themselves.

There are a myriad of synonyms for the word 'administrator'. These include organiser, co-ordinator, leader, manager, ruler, master, overseer, governor, director, superintendant, confronter, paymaster, chief, boss, dictator, initiator, developer, supporter, troubleshooter and even encourager. The word itself comes from the Latin 'administro' - I serve. Yet it is comparatively rare to come across an administrator who primarily views his/her role as that of a servant. Curiously two major groups in our culture are designated ministers - those who serve the Church and the Crown. Whilst the former may have retained something of the original meaning of the word in their function (although critics inside and outside the church dispute this) the latter are more frequently seen to be our masters. My own self esteem as an administrator grew rapidly when I also came to understand that the role could be a highly creative one. As such I see it to be a skill or a gift to be deliberately cultivated and practised. Human creativity in its many and beautifully varied expressions gives insights into truth and reality, and enriches our lives by taking already existing elements and reordering them into a new shape which has design and harmony. I can see no reason why administrators should devalue their work by ignoring the creativity inherent in it. Perhaps as an adjunct to this I have also come to see that an administrator can be an architect and a builder - of structures and situations which can be used and enjoyed in their own right by the people for whom, and with whom, they were designed. This use and enjoyment can happen quite independently of the architect and builder. I particularly like the images of architect and builder for administrators because they imply partnership with, and service on behalf of, the ones who commission the structure developed.

2. The link between administrators and values

To speak of the administrator in any of these ways - master, servant, dictator, encourager, manager, artist, boss or builder, is to move consideration of administration into the area of human values. It is my conviction that administration, like education, is never neutral. Every administrative action reflects the values held by those responsible. Structures, processes, teaching situations and working relationships all betray the values held by groups or individuals who construct them.

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Whether the perpetrators clearly perceive and acknowledge the values is irrelevant. But it seems to be a particularly profitable undertaking to clarify them as much as possible so that administrative decisions, and action taken to implement decisions, become more and more integrated with the values we hold. It may well be that a scrutiny of our administration will lead to a reordering of our values but this is a risk well worth taking.

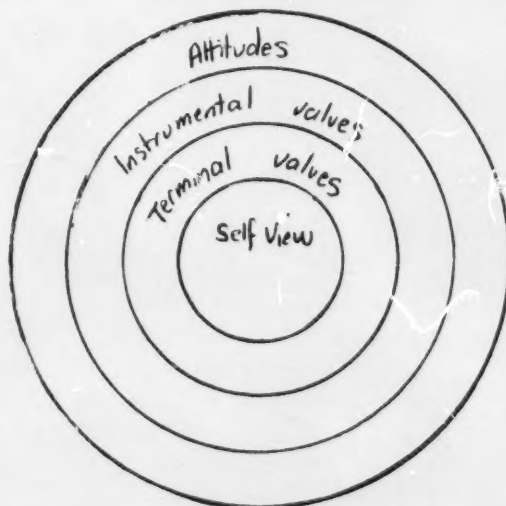
3. The place of values in human endeavour

A very useful introduction to ways of thinking about values and value systems is contained in an article by Milton Rokeach. The Nature of Human Values and Value Systems (see M. Smith A Practical Guide to Value Classification Universal Associates Inc. California, 1977 ISBN 0-88390-124-2) Rokeach argues on the following grounds that values are crucial to any study and understanding of sociology, anthropology, psychology, psychiatry politics, economics, history and education. I would want to add administration to his list.

- (i) The total number of values a person possesses is relatively small.
- (ii) All men everywhere possess the same values to different degrees.
- (iii) Values are organised into value systems.
- (iv) The antecedents of human values can be traced to cultures and societies and their institutions and personalities.
- (v) The consequences of human values will be manifested in virtually all social behaviour which we might want to investigate and explain.

4. Differentiating between values

The values of an individual or a society or even a group within a society (such as an adult literacy organization) may be represented in the following manner.



- (i) Starting at the centre self view or self concept can be defined as that sense of one's self which has been formed by life's experiences, interaction with others and the resulting development of values, together with their organisation into a value system.
- (ii) Terminal values are seen as desirable end states. These may be (a) personal (salvation, peace of mind, truth) or they may be (b) social (justice, equality, mercy, freedom, fraternity or brotherhood, national security, world peace). If the number of terminal values has a correlation with human needs then Freud would say there are only two terminal values, Maslow five, and Murray twenty eight. Rokeach thinks it's reasonable to guess at a total about half way between 2 and 28. At one point in his writing Maslow proposes only one final goal:
 "For one thing, it looks as if there were a single, ultimate value for mankind, a far goal to which all men strive. This is called variously . . . self actualisation, self realisation, integration, psychological health, autonomy, creativity, productivity, but they all agree that this amounts to realising the potentialities of the person, that is to say becoming fully human, everything that the person can become".
- (iii) Instrumental values are modes of conduct or the means employed in our journey towards desirable end states. Instrumental values can also be divided into two categories.
 (a) Those which have a focus on personal relationships and which, when violated, arouse feelings of guilt. These are moral instrumental values. (b) other instrumental values have a competence factor attached. Failure to meet their requirements leads to "feelings of shame about personal inadequacy rather than feelings of guilt or wrong doing. Thus, behaving honestly and responsibly lead one to feel that he is behaving morally, whereas behaving logically, intelligently or imaginatively leads one to feel that he is behaving competently. A person may experience conflict between two moral values (e.g. behaving honestly and lovingly), ^(e.g. imaginatively and logically) or between a moral and a competence value ^(e.g. to act competently) (e.g. to act impolitely and to offer intellectual criticism)" It is thought that there is a limit to instrumental values too - if terminal values exist in tens then this group may be limited to hundreds.
- (iv) Attitudes are even further out from the centre and exist in their thousands. Even a simple object like a chair, any chair at all, may provoke as many attitudes as there are people to view it. Literacy is something which stimulates a vast number of reactions at this level.

5. The interconnection between these levels of values

A fully integrated person or group would demonstrate total congruence between their sense of themselves, their terminal values and their attitudes. But some groups and individuals show dissonance when these are compared. One American survey showed that a group of people who valued salvation highly (and were assumed to be churchgoers) had very negative attitudes towards Martin Luther King feeling that he had brought his assassination on himself. The interplay between the various levels is a complex one especially as people

constantly adjust their values. The experience of Life Line in Victoria, for example, shows that crisis experiences force re-evaluations on us. A woman who has just discovered that her husband is having sexual relationships outside their marriage must cope with the disintegration and dislocation of that experience by re-examining the place of this marriage in her value system. She may continue to value a faithful and successful marriage very highly but she will have been forced to make adjustments in the process of re-integration after the failure of her own.

6. Literacy in this framework of values

It seems clear that literacy fits into the above definitions as an instrumental value of the competency variety since it is a mode of conduct and generally seen as a means to various ends. It is common for non-readers to feel shame about their personal inadequacy in a society where the overwhelming majority read and write. Guilt sometimes associated with illiteracy may emanate from a real or imagined failure to act responsibly when the means for learning were available (aggressive or passive behaviour at school or truancy) but it may be argued that this is related to, rather than intrinsic to, the absence of literacy skills.

7. Evaluating literacy programs by this framework

A. The Council of Adult Education Victoria

In the organisation to which I belong, administrative staff are asked to prepare a report on their year's activities. These are compiled into an Annual Report which is presented to State Parliament by the Minister of Education. Now this can be something of a chore and each year people try to find a new line for what may be a year fairly like the one which went before. If, as I have argued, this administrative action, like all administrative actions, betrays the values of the administrator then there will be clues about the instrumental and terminal values at work in that program. The C.A.E.'s 1979 report on adult literacy (see Appendix I) does yield some of this information. It was written without any sense of the difference between instrumental and terminal values, so there is no clear differentiation of them to be found in it. Nevertheless the emphasis on personal relationships suggests that a terminally valued notion is brotherhood or fraternity. Here is only one example of many areas touched on by that short document, which, when subjected to the analysis of this values framework, gives the reader a partial idea at least of the means and ends towards which the literacy program concerned is striving.

B. Paulo Freire

In his writings about education generally and literacy in particular Freire seems to present two opposing notions of the educative process. When they are placed side by side two different terminal values towards which education can lead emerge in sharp contrast. (See Appendix II for definitions of some of the terms used below).

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Authoritarian Education

1. The student is an object
2. Content is predetermined. Knowledge is what can be memorised. Education is training to see reality in a particular and oppressive way. The student internalizes this oppressive reality.
3. Method is narrative. The person is a listener, spectator, a mug to be filled. The teacher provides the information.
4. Result is introjection and personal alienation. On a large scale this is massification where people are unthinking pawns. The person is over-programmed and controlled.

Revolutionary Education

1. The student is a subject
2. Content arises from dialogue between the teacher and students. Conscientisation ensues. This is praxis - reflection and action influencing each other. Knowledge is acquired from the actions of people in the world.
3. Method is questioning. Information is presented as problems to be solved. These problems are related to the epoch. Generative themes emerge and these are investigated as problems.
4. Result A change in consciousness produces self conscious, intentional, free people who are responsible, aware and critical. The person and the society are liberated.

To illustrate some aspects of these contrasting teaching methods here are two quotations from primers in use during the 1960's. Both touch on the struggle for a better way of life.

Movement of Base Education (Brazil) From a group outside power.

"I live and I struggle.
Pedro lives and struggles.
The people live and struggle.
I, Pedro and the people struggle.
We struggle to live.
To live is to struggle.

"Pedro is disturbed and thinks -
Why is our life so harsh?
Why do so many children die here?
Why don't the people have housing?
Why don't the people learn to read?
Why aren't there schools for our children?
Why do people suffer so much injustice?

Comunidad (Chile) From a group inside power.

"So that governments can achieve the plans for collective welfare they need the support of the population. The community therefore, ought to organise itself and unite its forces to that of government and thus be able to better its economic, social and cultural conditions".

"The struggle to elevate the level of life in the country and permit each Chilean to enjoy better conditions of life and a larger quantity of goods and essential services . . . is what is called Economic and Social Development. Chile is engaged in this great enterprise."

I believe that Freire forces us to confront the fact that we are either working for liberation and the full development of human potential or for the control and manipulation of people. The latter may be with the best intentions but is nevertheless a paternalistic imposition. It could be argued that Freire too cannot avoid a degree of imposition, especially in the selection of issues at the earliest stages of conscientisation since there is no avoiding the initiating role of the teacher at that point.

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However, each of us as administrators and teachers function somewhere along the continuum between totalitarianism and liberation, between pre-determining structures and dialogue wherein these are evolved. Our bias shows in the way administration is carried out. Our administration as well as our teaching can be tested against his framework. It would all fall short of the ideal I suspect even in those instances where administrators are committed to the instrumental and terminal values Freire holds.

C. Adult literacy work in Victoria

It is important to realize that Freire visited Victoria and had a profound influence on and extensive discussions with key adult literacy workers at about the time adult literacy work was starting to take shape. It is helpful to understand that Victorian education has on the whole, and when compared with other states, been less centralised. Victorians show a readiness and preference for taking action at local levels. The adult literacy network in Victoria has certain characteristics which reflect these two factors.

- (i) There is no centralised direction of, or control over, literacy programs. We have a list of 70 city referral points and 30 country programs. Each program has a sense of its own autonomy and direction. Even ^{Academy of Adult Education} ~~ALAE~~ College based programs reflect this desire to manage their own destiny.
- (ii) This almost fiercely held freedom or autonomy has led to great variations from one scheme to another.
- (iii) The need to respond to local circumstances, both social and educational, and to utilise the particular skills and interests of local people is constantly stressed.
- (iv) Historically the development of the Victorian Adult Literacy Council came at a stage when literacy workers felt a need to support one another, communicate regularly, co-ordinate their activities and speak with one voice to government and educational authorities.
- (v) Students and volunteers are actively involved in decision making in local programs and in the V.A.L.C.

We are becoming aware that what is to us a logical, creative, well ordered, co-operative, relevant and involving adult literacy network appears inefficient and chaotic to an outsider. Whilst it could be argued that such a pattern has developed because educational authorities have failed dismally to take up their responsibilities for the non-literate adult (this is true) we resist any idea that our pattern is the product of chance. We have actively and intentionally encouraged our network to grow along these lines. Whilst we recognise that more professional support is now required there is no doubt that we will try to resist any attempts to rob us of the qualities we have deliberately fostered. Our intention is to pursue these professional positions as a means to strengthen and extend what already exists. There isn't much choice for us if we say we want to influence the direction taken, for example, by the ACAL (see Adult Literacy Some Australian Papers, ed. A.J.A. Nelson, Recommendations of the First National Conference on Adult Literacy. Canberra 1977). We can hardly deny volunteer tutors and students their right to influence directions taken in Victoria. If we are hoping that literacy will promote personal freedom and growth, we will try to find ways for this to happen at every point of the process.

Conclusion

In this paper I have described a values framework for administration - both by outlining one way of categorising values and by using this categorization to understand something of what is going on in three different examples of adult literacy work. I haven't attempted an exhaustive outline of values nor have I tried to apply them in an overly systematic way. It was my intention to describe some ideas which have ^{been} very generative for me as an adult literacy administrator. There is much more which could be said about each example but it seemed sufficient to point to broad areas of application rather than argue them in minute detail.